

THE  
**FUTURE  
OF  
AMERICA'S  
NATIONAL  
PARKS**

First Annual  
Centennial Strategy for

# Aztec Ruins National Monument

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



**Site:** AZRU

**Year:** 2007

**Vision Statement**

Aztec Ruins National Monument is the keeper of a remarkable community of ruins along the Animas River in northwest New Mexico. These ancient structures of the early Pueblo people are preserved and protected to tell their stories, so that the people of today and future generations can understand and appreciate that multi-faceted culture. In honor of the NPS centennial anniversary, to connect more people to the great outdoors, and in an attempt to unite us all as Americans, we will work collaboratively with park neighbors, partners, tribes, and others, moving forward together to shape our future.

**Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager**

Dennis L. Carruth, Superintendent

Site: AZRU

STEWARDSHIP

☒ Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

☒ Improve high-priority assets to acceptable condition, as measured by the Facility Condition Index.

Maintain accurate data in the Facility Management System Software (FMSS) program through yearly condition assessments, estimating cost of deficiencies using the Cost Estimating System Software (CESS), closing completed work orders, and updating Cost Replacement Values (CRV) as needed. The accurate data will be used to apply for funds through the Cyclic Maintenance and Repair/Rehabilitation Programs which will be used to repair deficiencies identified by the condition assessments.

☐ The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Rehabilitate High-Priority Historic Structures  
Aztec Ruins National Monument contains five historic structures that are essential to the park mandate. Consequently, all five are included on the NPS List of Classified Structures. Three of the structures are ancestral Pueblo ruins providing outstanding examples of ancient buildings constructed in a style similar to Chaco Canyon. Another structure is the only reconstructed Chaco Canyon style great kiva, and the other structure is the Visitor Center which was built in Pueblo revival style by the archeologist who excavated Aztec Ruins—Earl Morris—in the early 20th century. This variety of historic structures provides a challenge to preservation because of the varying age and type of building. Aztec Ruins NM will continue to keep preservation of these historic structures a critical priority. Their preservation requires a constant program of resource monitoring, condition assessment, and both preventive and cyclic preservation maintenance to keep them in good condition and interpreted for park visitors.

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STEWARDSHIP

☒ **Assure that no compelling chapter in the American heritage experience remains untold and that strategically important landscapes are acquired, as authorized by Congress.**

☒ **Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)**

The park will continue to explore options with the Archaeological Conservancy, NPCA, the Santa Fe lands office, and the owner to acquire Tract 101-40, the #1 priority parcel for acquisition, which is within the authorized boundary. The current owners recently inherited the parcel, and the interests were divided between three heirs. It is their intent to sell the property to split the inheritance. The current heirs are extremely interested in selling this parcel to the NPS, and have agreed to temporarily hold off accepting offers from the other interested parties until we, or a non-profit organization, can make an offer. They currently have a valid offer from the adjacent mobile home park, which is seeking to expand. Impacts of such an expansion, along with the accompanying infrastructure, would be irreversible and the cost of acquisition would be many times what it is today. There are two known archaeological sites and significant potential for additional cultural resources on the parcel. The monument will keep pursuing options to try to include this important portion of America's heritage within its protective borders.

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STEWARDSHIP

☒ **Encourage children to be future conservationists.**

☒ **Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)**

The park will continue and expand on opportunities to involve children in special interpretive programming that encourages interest in their heritage and fosters a conservation ethic, such as the park Junior Program, special kids and family formal programs, partnered activities with area schools, libraries, clubs, and churches, and online activities, including curriculum-driven learning opportunities.

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Site: AZRU

ENVIRONMENT

☒ Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.

☒ Serve as a model for energy efficiency, under Executive Order 13423, by ensuring Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

The employees of Aztec Ruins National Monument will safeguard and enhance the ecological processes and the natural, scenic, cultural, recreational and educational values of the monument. We will strive for exemplary environmental management and leadership through compliance with all applicable laws, including federal, state, and local laws, regulations, requirements, policies, and Executive Orders addressing the protection of the environment. To fulfill these commitments, we will incorporate best management practices, foster the sustainable use of natural resources, promote pollution prevention, reduce waste generation, purchase environmentally preferable products, and recycle and reuse the materials where practicable in our operations. We will strive for continual environmental improvement and accountability.

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Site: AZRU

ENVIRONMENT

☒ Engage partners, communities, and visitors in shared environmental stewardship.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The park will continue to seek opportunities to work with partners, local organizations and the public to plan and implement a shared vision for environmental stewardship in San Juan County. We will practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources, and help educate and enlist our local communities to protect and restore cultural landscapes and the quality of the natural environment.

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Site: AZRU

RECREATION

☒ Encourage collaboration among and assist park and recreation systems at every level-federal, regional, state, local-to help build an outdoor recreation network accessible to all Americans.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Aztec Ruins, Rivers Trails and Conservation Assistance program, the City of Aztec, Aztec Trails & Open Space (ATOS), and local partners have developed a concept plan for a trail system linking the community's major assets. The project is a looped pathway incorporating some of the most significant and unique assets in Northwest NM. Aztec Ruins stands as a significant cultural asset that will incorporate the trail into the preservation of the cultural landscape that extends beyond park boundaries as well as connect it to the greater community and to the historic downtown across the river. The trail will provide the opportunity to transition visitors as they move from the modern city to the ancient one, along the route of the Old Spanish Trail. The trail will improve opportunities for people to view and experience these resources and support diverse educational, recreational, inspirational and physical activities while conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife habitat, and cultural resources of the river environment. Aztec Ruins/NPS will provide technical and financial support for the planning and development.

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Site: AZRU

RECREATION

☒ Expand partnerships with schools and boys and girls associations to show how national park experiences can improve children's lives.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The park will continue and expand on existing partnerships with local schools, San Juan College's Kid's Kollege program, the Aztec and Farmington Boys and Girls Clubs, and the Aztec Public Library After School Program to offer fun and educational National Park related experiences for children. Also, the site will actively seek partnerships with area colleges and other resources to create distance learning and other online interpretive opportunities for children, such as web ranger activities.

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Site: AZRU

RECREATION

☒ Focus national, regional, and local tourism efforts to reach diverse audiences and young people and to attract visitors to lesser-known parks.

☒ Increase the number of visitors that attend ranger-facilitated programs such as campfire talks, hikes, and school programs.

The park will seek opportunities to increase the quantity and quality of formal interpretive walks, talks, and illustrated programs, both on and offsite. Programming offsite will target diverse area audiences, especially young people. The site will increasingly partner with local civic organizations to facilitate park significance-related on and offsite programs and actively promote special activities of community interest by park staff and other resource-related professionals. The park also has a partnership goal to work closely with local Chambers of Commerce to publicize the park's facilitated programs. To promote visitor and partner demand for NPS interpretive services the park will emphasize quality outcome-based interpretive products through active participation in the NPS Interpretive Development Program.

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Site: AZRU

EDUCATION

☒ Promote life-long learning to connect generations through park experiences.

☒ Enroll an additional two million children in the Junior Ranger program.

In partnership with the Western National Parks Association, the park will revitalize its existing Junior Ranger program to promote and assure that more people enjoy and gain preservation values through the program. In addition, individually and in joint venture with other ancestral Pueblo parks, the site will create on-line web ranger activities promoting interpretive messages and preservation values.

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Site: AZRU

EDUCATION

☒ Impart to every American a sense of their citizen ownership of their national parks.

☒ Increase visitors' satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of the parks they visit.

The park will provide consistently high quality janitorial and maintenance services for public facilities, including the picnic area, parking lots, interpretive trails, visitor center restrooms, and exhibits. A heating, ventilation, and cooling system will be added to the visitor center. In addition, the site will provide excellent visitor safety, protection, and recreational services; and visitors will make intellectual and emotional connections with the site through informal interpretation at the visitor center information desk and along the West Ruin Trail, through formal interpretive programs, educational programs, special presentations and interpretive demonstrations, and through media services including web activities, audio/visual offerings, publications, and junior ranger programs. Finally, management will actively promote a culture of evaluation and create opportunities for visitor input in these activities.

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Site: AZRU

PROFESSIONALISM

☒ Promote a safety and health culture for all employees and visitors.

☒ Reduce the number of employee lost-time incidents and serious visitor injuries by 20 percent.

Safety messages will be communicated at safety meetings and repeated at monthly staff meeting and at all management team meetings. Personal protective equipment (PPE) will be provided and worn as appropriate and necessary. If or when a lost time incident occurs the appropriate supervisor will use SMIS to record the incident and will conduct a vigorous root cause analysis which will be shared among the management team and safety committee for "lessons learned." NPS staff will conduct regular "tail-gate" safety training sessions prior to the execution of non-regularly and reoccurring tasks or projects. Additionally, "tail-gate" sessions will be periodically conducted on the regular and reoccurring tasks and projects to review and emphasis safe-work procedures.

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